

# WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD NORTH COAST REGION

## MONTHLY REPORT TO THE BOARD

July 2001

### *CLEANUPS AND SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION*

#### **Roseland Area Contamination, Update**

[Staff contact: Stephen Bargsten]

Staff are preparing comprehensive updates on each of the sites in the Southwest Santa Rosa area, including the McMinn Superfund site. The updates will also address progress by the County of Sonoma in their investigation on the halogenated volatile organic chemical (HVOC) contamination, being conducted in accordance with the Roseland Plan of Action.



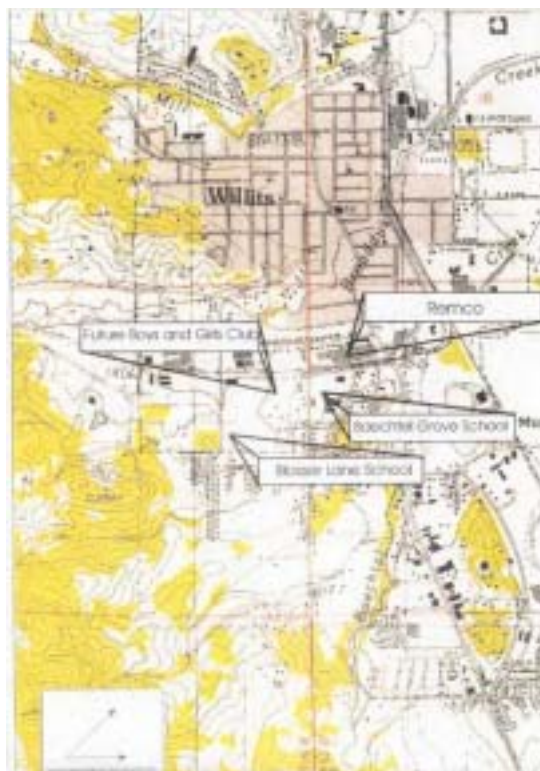
(Sonoma County and Regional Water Board staff conducting groundwater sampling at an auto wreckers in the McMinn area, Santa Rosa)

Reported elsewhere in this report is information regarding the Roseland Summer Splash that will be held on August 18, 2001.

#### **Baechtel Grove Middle School, Blosser Elementary School, and Proposed Willits Boys and Girls Club, Willits**

[Staff contact: Janice Goebel]

The Regional Water Board staff requested and received \$22,000 of Cleanup and Abatement Account funds for sampling and analysis needs associated



(Map depicting location of schools and proposed club, Willits)

with the collection of soil and groundwater samples on the Baechtel Grove Middle School, Blosser Elementary School, and the proposed Willits Boys and Girls Club. The schools and proposed club are located south of the former Remco Hydraulics Facility and a machine shop/ chrome plating facility.

The schools are upgradient from the Remco facility and staff have received complaints regarding potential disposal of wastes in these areas. Currently, no documented evidence exists for the alleged waste dumping on school property. However, because of the close proximity of the schools to the former Remco Hydraulics Plant and the potential exposure of school children to legacy contaminants in soils and runoff, staff plan to investigate this matter using the funds requested.

Regional Water Board staff sampled the Blosser Elementary School irrigation well over the past two years, and analytical results revealed low concentrations of the compound 1,1,1-trichloroethane. Concerns have also been raised regarding potential impacts on domestic water supply wells located near the schools. The investigation being proposed by staff is designed to ascertain the source of any contamination.

#### **Santa Rosa Creek Contamination by Farmers Lane**

[Staff contact: Joan Fleck]

Recent surface water samples from Santa Rosa Creek, collected as part of an ongoing site investigation by a responsible party, showed Methyl tert Butyl Ether (MtBE) in creek waters ranging from 0.57 to 80.8 ug/l. MtBE levels in trenches near the creek recently were measured at 10,000 ug/l. This site is located at the intersection of Fourth Street and Farmers Lane in Santa Rosa. The property is owned by Equilon Enterprises LLC (formerly Shell Oil Company) which operates a Shell branded retail gasoline station at this location. The site is approximately 240 feet north of Santa Rosa Creek. In 1987, fuel products were found leaking into Santa Rosa Creek. Shell Oil Company abated the discharge to the creek, defined the extent of petroleum hydrocarbon contamination and conducted groundwater remediation in compliance with Cleanup and Abatement Order No. 88-143. In 1995, groundwater samples were tested for MtBE and MtBE concentrations were detected at up to 140 ug/l (parts per billion). By 1997, MtBE concentrations increased to 110,000. A revised Feasibility Study and Corrective Action Plan were requested at that time. A Cleanup and Abatement Order has been prepared and will be issued after internal and legal review.

## **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

### **Clean Water Act 303(d) List**

[Staff contact: David Leland]

Regional Water Board staff have received a large volume of data in response to the public solicitation of data for the 2002 update of the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list. To allow review of these data and preparation of a staff report for transmittal to the State Board, staff are moving this information item from the August to the October Regional Water Board meeting.

### **Garcia River TMDL**

[Staff contact: Dave Evans]

On June 28, 2001, the Regional Water Board approved the proposed changes to the Garcia River Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Subsequently, the file record is being completed, and will be submitted to the State Board to support adoption of the revised TMDL. Following State Board action, the Office of Administrative Law will review the revised TMDL for approval.

### **Update on Gualala River Sediment Technical Source Document**

[Staff contact: Bryan McFadin]

The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Development Unit staff are in the process of completing the Draft Gualala River Sediment Technical Source Document (TSD). The Draft TSD will be released for public review this summer.

### **Clean Water Act Grants**

[Staff contact: Janet Blake]

A team of technical staff at the Regional Water Board is currently evaluating the federal Clean Water Act sections 319(h) and 205(j) grant proposals for the 2001-2002 grant cycle. This year, on a statewide basis, \$5 million is available for implementation [319(h)] of nonpoint source pollution prevention and control, and approximately \$500,000 can be allocated for watershed planning [205(j)]. Statewide, a total of 69 proposals for implementation projects and 31 proposals for planning projects have been submitted with 9 implementation and 4 planning proposals originating from the North Coast Region.

The staff level evaluation will be completed at the end of August, with development of a list of projects recommended for funding. After approval by two executive committees, the State Water Board will adopt the final funding list in November. Selected projects can begin work in the summer of 2002.

#### *WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION*

##### **Algae Sampling in Santa Rosa Creek**

[Staff contact: John Short]

The City of Santa Rosa (City) is planning to begin a special monitoring study in Santa Rosa Creek. The City plans to monitor for dissolved oxygen and, where oxygen depletion is found, additional algae samples will be collected. Regional Water Board staff plan to assist the City with the training of their staff to ensure that proper procedures are followed when the sampling is conducted.

##### **Lauterbach Winery, Todd Brothers Winery, Martin Family Winery, Moshin Vineyards, Ramazzotti Vineyards, Sonoma County**

[Staff contact: Mark Neely]

Planning applications were submitted to the Regional Water Board proposing the establishment of three 5,000 case wineries, a 35,000 case winery, and a 20,000 case winery. Lauterbach Winery proposes to use an existing barn and garage on 15 acres. Todd Brothers Winery proposes to build a 9600 square foot structure for barrel storage, office space, and a small private tasting room, as well as a 30-foot by 81-foot concrete tank pad to be used as a mobile crush pad and mobile bottling area.

The Martin Family Winery proposes to use an existing barn. The Moshin Vineyards proposes to build an 8400 square foot structure to house the production facility and a 2450 square foot building to house a tasting room and offices, and to convert fallow land into a vineyard.

The Ramazzotti Vineyards proposes to build a 4000 square foot structure for barrel storage and office space, and a 30-foot by 90-foot concrete tank pad to be used as a mobile crush pad and mobile bottling area. Grapes to be processed will be harvested from the vineyard located on their properties.

In the past, the Regional Water Board has not regulated subsurface discharges of wastes from winery facilities where Sonoma County adequately regulates subsurface disposal. Recently, staff has become concerned that wastewater production has been underestimated in small winery operations that have historically been waived for consideration of Waste Discharge Requirements. This underestimation has resulted in the undersizing and the potential failure of some subsurface disposal systems. Staff is beginning to more closely review all use permit applications calling for the construction or expansion of wineries with a case production greater than 100 cases.

##### **Klamath Basin Water Issues**

[Staff contact: Tom Dunbar]

Klamath Basin farmers are tapping a series of emergency wells to sustain their crops after the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation reduced available irrigation water to save threatened and endangered fish.

Last April, the Bureau cut off irrigation water to 90 percent of the 200,000 acres served by the Klamath Project straddling the Oregon-California border to allow sufficient water for endangered sucker fish and threatened Coho salmon.

At this time, wells are operating only on the California side of the basin. The first well came online on June 15, 2001, near Tulelake and produced 9,300 gallons per minute – about four times its expected output. The entire well field is expected to produce about 30,000 gallons per minute for crop irrigation.

The California Department of Water Resources is directing the project.

In California, counties control the use of groundwater, whereas in Oregon a state permit is required to drill wells.

Last month, California provided \$5 million in state emergency funds to the Tulelake Irrigation District to drill more than a dozen wells in Modoc and Siskiyou Counties.

The wells draw water from up to 740 feet below ground through a shaft powered by a 16-cylinder, 1,320 horsepower engine. Item 5 on the July agenda will present updated information on this matter.

## **Geysers Recharge Project, Update - Final Plans and Specifications Approval**

[Staff contact: Paul Keiran]

The proposed Geysers Pipeline Project will construct four pump stations to transport treated effluent from the Laguna Wastewater Treatment Plant to the Geysers geothermal area through a 41-mile pipeline.

The most technically complex section of the pipeline project is presently under construction in Healdsburg, involving tunneling under the Russian River in two locations. Four vertical boreholes, each approximately 30 feet in diameter by 90 feet deep, must first be dug to provide a staging area for lateral tunneling. The holes are sufficiently large to warrant support by a vinyl polymer slurry that will completely fill the holes. Metal casing will then be lowered down into the first hole, and the polymer removed for re-use in subsequent boreholes.

The pH of the polymer slurry is 11, which has raised some water quality concerns. According to the polymer developer and site personnel, there is no risk of surface or subsurface water pollution from this operation. The polymer pH will be adjusted with chlorine following use in the final borehole, with disposal options ranging from discharge to the sanitary sewer to land application.

Permits for pump stations were issued to the City of Santa Rosa (City) during the week of June 4, 2001. Upon completion, the project will enhance the electric power production at the Geysers and will allow the City to meet the Regional Water Board's requirements. The estimated total project cost is \$128 million.

### *TIMBER HARVEST DIVISION*

#### **Pacific Lumber Company**

[Staff contact: Frank Reichmuth]

On June 25 and 26, 2001, the Regional Water Board testified before the State Board on Pacific Lumber Company's (PALCO's) request to review a monitoring and reporting program order issued by the Regional Water Board Assistant Executive Officer for a proposed timber harvest plan. The State Board is not expected to render its decision until after August 2001.

In an unrelated matter, PALCO has won two key rulings in suits filed in Humboldt County Superior Court against logging in the Freshwater Creek area and in the Mattole.

Plaintiffs failed to show that the logging planned for Freshwater would irreparably harm Freshwater residents, ruled visiting Trinity County District Court Judge Anthony Edwards. Edwards declined to order a halt to the logging, which the Humboldt Watershed Council asked for in February after the California Department of Forestry approved the plan.

#### **Hawthorne Timber Company, LLC; the Campbell Group; Campbell Timberland Management, LLC, HTC Log Corporation; and Western Blasting Technologies**

[Staff contact: Christine Wright-Shacklett]

The Regional Water Board staff is working on finalizing a settlement with Hawthorne Timber Company and other named parties in the Administrative Civil Liability Complaint (ACLC) that was issued on March 29, 2001, by the Regional Water Board Executive Officer. The ACLC was issued pursuant to California Water Code section 13350 for violations of water quality laws and regulations related to the discharge of earthen material from rock blasting at a rock quarry into Two Log Creek, a tributary to the Big River in Mendocino County.

The Regional Water Board subcommittee hearing panel that was scheduled for July 12, 2001, has been cancelled. Also, the hearing before the Regional Water Board pertaining to this matter scheduled for July 25 and 26, 2001, in Yreka has been cancelled at this time.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL LIABILITY COMPLAINTS/ ORDERS**

There were no Administrative Civil Liability Complaints issued during the month of June.

## **CALIFORNIA WATER CODE SECTION 13267 LETTER ORDERS**

There were four California Water Code section 13267(b) Orders issued during the month of June. Below are descriptions of the Orders issued:

## **Mission Arbors, Sonoma County**

[Staff contact: Andrew Jensen]

Regional Water Board staff responded to a complaint regarding the construction of a linear dirt pathway along Santa Rosa Creek, beginning at the Mission Boulevard bridge crossing, and extending the length of the Mission Arbors development.



(Santa Rosa Creek, Mission Arbors Development, Sonoma County)

Upon inspection of the site, staff observed that a newly-created trail was built within 4-5 feet of the wetted low-flow channel, resulting in exposure of erosive soils with residual slash and debris remaining after construction.

The trail had an average width of three to four feet. Some of the dirt and debris had been discharged into Santa Rosa Creek during construction. The construction of the dirt trail had resulted in riparian vegetation removal within the ordinary high water level, including some mature willow trees. In addition, the in-stream shade had been reduced as a result of the riparian removal.

Staff are concerned about the potential detrimental water quality impacts that may arise from the trail. These impacts may include, but are not limited to, increased erosion along the length of the trail during storm events, reduced shade and woody debris recruitment due to riparian vegetation removal, and increases in turbid runoff into Santa Rosa Creek. Staff may be taking additional enforcement actions upon review of the facts.

## **Jon Green Vineyard Development, Willits**

[Staff contact: Andrew Baker]

In response to a report from the California Department of Forestry (CDF), staff from the Regional Water Board inspected the new vineyard development. CDF is investigating the vineyard development for violations of the Forest Practice Act and failure to obtain a Timber Harvest Plan and Timberland Conversion Permit.

Staff revealed that the vineyard is approximately 65 acres in size and located along a ridge. Staff was informed by the landowner of plans to construct an earthen fill embankment in the ravine which will be approximately 50 feet high with 2-to-1 fill slope. Staff roughly estimates that 70,000 to 140,000 cubic yards of earthen material will be placed in the ravine and/or discharged into the watercourse. The landowner does not have an engineered plan for earthwork, fill embankment construction, drainage system design, and erosion control. Staff are concerned about the threatened discharges associated with the project, and the long-term erosion potential of the project and have requested a technical report be submitted.

The technical report will need to include engineering plans, verification from all agencies involved that all required permits are obtained, a vineyard drainage and erosion control plan, and documentation that all drainage and erosion control devices have been designed to withstand 100-year storm events.

## **Lolonis Vineyard and Dam Construction Project, Redwood Valley**

[Staff contact: Andrew Jensen]

On June 26, 2001, the Regional Water Board staff issued a second 13267(b) Order to Ulysses Lolonis requiring a complete and adequate technical report which includes a complete assessment of the discharge of earthen material that resulted from the landowner's reservoir, dam, spillway, road and vineyard construction activities.

In response to the 13267(b) Order issued on April 2, 2001, staff received the Lolonis Vineyards Erosion Assessment and Preliminary Action Plan, dated June 6, 2001. Staff determined that the report is incomplete, inadequate, and was submitted after the required due date of May 2, 2001.





(Watercourse A – Lolonis Vineyards)

Watercourse A is covered with sediment that was discharged during the dam construction. The June 26, 2001, 13267(b) Order requires an estimate of the sediment in Watercourse A that was discharged during dam construction activities.



(Watercourse B - Lolonis Vineyards)

Watercourse B was filled with earthen material during road and spillway construction. A cement truck access road and turn-around area was constructed in the watercourse and left to erode over the last two winters. Severe vineyard erosion also contributed a large volume of sediment to Watercourse B.

The June 6, 2001, Lolonis Vineyards Assessment estimated that over 90 cubic yards was discharged to Watercourse B.

## Liquid Transfer LLC – Highway 20 at Mile Post 21.61, Mendocino County

[Staff contact: Dan Warner]

This tanker spill on February 26, 2001, on Highway 20 at Mile Post 21.61 in Mendocino County, was a multi-agency emergency response coordinated by the Department of Fish and Game. Oversight of remedial activities at the site has transitioned to the Regional Water Board in June 2001.



(Intercepted petroleum in a tributary to James Creek, Mendocino County, June 28, 2001)

Surface water samples continue to be collected and analyzed from the affected tributary and James Creek.

Staff considers the continuing discharge of petroleum hydrocarbons into surface waters to be recoverable and subject to continuing cleanup actions.



(Spill cleanup actions in a tributary to James Creek, Mendocino County, June 28, 2001)

## CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 CERTIFICATIONS

There were seven Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certifications and one Denial Without Prejudice issued during the month of June.

Information regarding all proposed certifications is available at our Internet web site at:

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb1/notice404.html>

Staff issued letters on March 28, 2001, and May 1, 2001, requesting a work plan that describes the long-term sampling and monitoring of the tributary to James Creek, a schedule for assessment of all feasible long-term cleanup actions for the residual petroleum wastes, and the April and May Monthly Reports, along with approved recovery proceedings from Oil Spill Prevention Response. These documents have not yet been received. Staff are considering further enforcement proceedings regarding this matter.

## SPILLS, COMPLAINTS, AND INVESTIGATIONS

There were five spills reported on the Sanitary Sewer Overflow and Spill Data Management System since the last report.

## UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK CLEANUP FUND PROGRAM

During the month of June, there were no Letters of Commitment issued in Region 1. From April 2001 through June 2001, there has been a total of \$297,228 in funds issued to tank owners in Region 1 from the Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund.

## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES/ WORKSHOPS/UPCOMING EVENTS

- The Regional Water Board Planning Unit staff (Dave Evans, Lauren Clyde, Ranjit Gill, and Cathleen Hudson) conducted public workshops on the triennial review of the Regional Water Board's Basin Plan. Workshops were held on June 5, 6, and 12, in Eureka, Yreka, and Santa Rosa, respectively.

The purpose of the workshops was to provide the public ample opportunity to input on the current Basin Plan, as well as to inform them of the purpose of the Basin Plan and Review. The adoption hearing for the 2001-2203 Triennial Review Priority List is scheduled for August 23, 2001.

- The Regional Water Board sponsored two workshops on June 6 in Santa Rosa and June 7 in Eureka. The well-attended workshops were for permittees, consultants and other interested parties affected by the new California Toxics Rule and the state's Policy for Implementation of Toxic Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays and Estuaries. Regional Water Board staff presented the requirements of the new policy and in Santa Rosa was joined by Jim Maughan from the State Board Regulatory Unit. Maughan presented an overview of the policy and helped clarify the state and regional boards' monitoring and reporting requirements under this policy. Questions from the audience were taken during a panel discussion that followed the presentation.

- Regional Water Board staff attended a meeting of the Public Participation Facilitation Committee (PPFC) on June 8, 2001, at the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors' Hearing Room. The PPFC is an advisory group relating to the Section 7 Consultation under the Endangered Species Act between the National Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA). The Section 7 Consultation is evaluating effects of SCWA operations and maintenance activities on listed species and their critical habitat. PPFC Committee members include representatives from Sonoma and Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, NMFS, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District, the Resources Agency, the Farm Bureau, and the Regional Water Board. The next PPFC meeting will be held in December 2001 in Ukiah. It will focus on Report 3: Instream Flows.



(Information booths at 2000 Summer Splash Event)

- On June 23, 2001, Supervising Water Resource Control Engineer Susan Warner made a presentation at the Water Quality Forum II, which was sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County. The topic was protecting our drinking water sources, including a discussion about toxics and contaminants.
- Staff of the Santa Rosa Cleanups Unit is preparing for the Summer Splash event to be held on August 18, 2001, at Roseland Elementary School in Santa Rosa. The purpose of this event is to update residents on groundwater contamination and cleanup issues in the area.



(From left – Lee Michlin and Manuel Baldenegro signing up public participants at the 2000 Summer Splash Event Welcome Booth)

The event is designed to be a fun yet educational event that will be attractive to families.

## WEB SITE UPDATE

The Administrative Procedures Manual for the Storm Water Program is now available on the Regional Water Board's Intranet. It can be accessed at:

<http://r1web.swrcb.ca.gov/>

## PUBLIC FILE REVIEW

From June 1 through July 1, 2001, two written requests were made for review of the Regional Water Board's records. These files were made available pursuant to the California Public Records Act. In addition, a total of 29 people came into the office and requested file review.

## PROMOTIONS/STAFF HIRING

New hires during the month of June include Kirsten James, an Environmental Specialist I and Ben Zabinsky, a Water Resource Control Engineer.

## JULY AND AUGUST REGIONAL WATER BOARD MEETINGS



The Regional Water Board meeting for July is scheduled for July 25 (closed session only beginning at 2:00 p.m.) and July 26, 2001, in Yreka. The August meeting will be held on August 23, 2001, in Santa Rosa.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our web-site at <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov>.